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PANEL SAYS THERE'S NO EVIDENCE OF CIA LINKS TO DEATH SQUADS
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WASHINGTON

The House Intelligence Committee turned thumbs down T Massachusetts congressman's bid to obtain intelligence documents that the congressman said would show whether the CIA is involved in death squad activity in El Salvador.

The committee, in a report on a resolution of inquiry introduced by Rep. James Shannon, D-Mass., said that after a "rigorous review of intelligence documents and records" it had "found no evidence of any agency complicity in death squad activities."

The panel recommended that the House reject Shannon's resolution, which would call upon the president to turn the documents over to Congress.

Instead, the committee said, it had asked the CIA to conduct "a review of all agency relationships with the aim of providing a reliable and comprehensive report on the subject of death squad activity ... and any possible improper CIA involvement therein."

It said CIA Director William J. Casey agreed to undertake such a review.

Shannon, saying the committee's decision "leaves the American people in the dark about how far the CIA has gone in El Salvador," asked the panel to conduct an investigation of its own. Shannon is not a member of the committee.

In the resolution, Shannon asked whether either Col. Nicholas Caranza, chief of the Treasury Police of El Salvador, or Roberto D'Aubuisson, a former Salvadoran army officer and now a presidential candidate, had received any remuneration of any kind from the CIA.

The resolution was introduced after reports linking Caranza and D'Aubuisson to death squads which have been blamed for political murders in El Salvador and saying the two men may have had a clandestine relationship with the CIA.

Both men have denied any involvement with death squads.

The committee, in its report, cited a presidential order providing that, "no person employed by or acting on behalf of the United States government shall engage in or conspire to engage in assassination."

The order also states, "No agency of the intelligence community shall participate in or request any person to undertake activities forbidden by this order."

"Both provisions act to prohibit absolutely U.S. participation in activities engaged in by the death squads in El Salvador," the committee said.

The report went on to say:

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